

U.S. Takes Needling At NATO

By Robert H. Estabrook

The Washington Post Foreign Service

LONDON, May 11 — The United States encountered flurries of friendly criticism from some of its NATO allies today on subjects ranging from policy in the Dominican Republic and Viet-Nam to supersalesmanship over arms contracts.

Sharpest comments came from Norwegian Foreign Minister Halvard Lange, who said that his country had difficulty accepting the argument that the United States had a right of intervention in the Dominican Republic.

While expressing understanding of American motives in Viet-Nam, Lange developed the fear that escalation of the conflict might get out of control. Other delegates suggested that Lange, a staunch friend of the United States, is under political pressure in Norway.

Most of the criticism was in speeches prepared before Under Secretary of State George Ball gave a classified rundown on American actions in the Dominican Republic. Secretary of State Rusk, who is due here Wednesday morning, is scheduled to take a detailed exposition of American policy in Viet-Nam.

In private, many senior delegates have been less concerned with the substance of American policy than with the personal role of President Johnson. An uneasy bewilderment prevails about the involvement of the President in small details of diplomacy and about what is described as an appearance of petulance.

In contrast to the misgivings about American policy in Viet-Nam, British Prime Minister Wilson called attention to "subtle" treats outside the immediate NATO Area. He coupled this, however, with a

blast at "high-pressure salesmanship which the armaments manufacturers of this or that country can mobilize in their sales drive."

Wilson and other British officials have previously protested what they regard as unfair competition by American arms producers backed by the governmental drive to reduce the balance of payments deficit.

The criteria, Wilson insisted, should be military effectiveness and cost. "Trust and interdependence between governments are one thing," he said "subordination to individual industries quite another."

Referring to Britain's own balance of payments deficit, he warned that country would not continue to shoulder an "unfair share" of the burden of defense costs. This was a sharp allusion to efforts to induce Germany to carry more of the expense of British troops on the Rhine.

Danish Foreign Minister Per Hækkerup took a gentle poke at the American thesis that intervention in the Dominican Republic was necessary to prevent a Communist takeover.

On a recent trip to East Africa, he said, he found that the leaders were not Communists. But if the West assumed that they were motivated by communism they could easily be driven to embrace it.

Using an opposite argument, Portuguese Foreign Minister A. Franco Nogueira contended that African Guerrilla campaigns against Angola and Mozambique are Communist-inspired and that the alliance should recognize this.

In an oblique reference to Viet-Nam, he termed it unacceptable that a crisis in one area should be of concern to NATO because of the involvement of one country, but not a crisis arising from the same sources in another area.

Other foreign ministers for the most part refrained from direct criticism but reiterated the need for better advance consultation in the alliance.

Most surprising were the comments of French Foreign Minister Maurice Couve de Murville, who touched lightly on the possibility of conflict with China and the Soviet Union arising out of the war in Viet-Nam, but otherwise confined his comments to Europe.